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INFO RUEHXK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 002293

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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/WATERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/05/2017

TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PINS](#) [IS](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#)

SUBJECT: NABLUS DEPLOYMENT: PATROLS/ARREST OPERATIONS  
UNDERWAY

REF: JERUSALEM 2275

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. According to the PA National Security Forces (NSF) commander BG Thiab Ali (Abu al-Fatah) and other PA security forces (PASF) contacts, NSF-led forces are patrolling Nablus, inspecting vehicles at six major checkpoints, and have surrounded Balata refugee camp in an operation to arrest wanted gunmen and confiscate illegal weapons (ongoing as of 1600 local). BG Ali said he issued instructions at a 1000 meeting with PASF chiefs to shift from surveys/reconnaissance to active arrest operations directed at anyone outside the security forces found carrying weapons regardless of identity or faction. He said PM Salam Fayyad instructed PASF chiefs at a November 4 meeting to disarm and arrest any PASF personnel attempting to obstruct the PA security operation. End summary.

Situation on the Ground: Patrols  
Underway, Balata Camp Situation Tense

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¶2. (C) As of 1500 local on November 5, security contacts report that NSF-led forces are patrolling Nablus in jeeps/trucks and on foot. They are inspecting passing vehicles at six major checkpoints in the city center and critical road intersections. They have surrounded Balata refugee camp to arrest wanted gunmen and confiscate illegal weapons. In Balata Camp, negotiations are underway to persuade two al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades gunmen to surrender to the NSF and turn in their weapons, but camp residents including several women and youths are in front of one of the gunmen's house, blocking access. The NSF report confiscating one pistol and detaining at least two Palestinians. They say they continue to search for other wanted criminals and militants.

¶3. (C) NSF commander BG Ali said he arrived in Nablus early November 5 and instructed PASF chiefs to move from surveys/reconnaissance to active arrest operations. BG Ali said he instructed PASF commanders that there is a total prohibition on public display of weapons, and that they should arrest anyone outside the security forces found with weapons on the street or in vehicles, regardless of identity or faction. BG Ali said PM Salam Fayyad instructed PASF chiefs at a meeting late November 4 that any PASF personnel who attempt to obstruct the PA security operation must be arrested and their names passed to a joint security committee for appropriate disciplinary/criminal action.

Equipment Confiscation

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¶4. (C) On November 3, the IDF confiscated 80-90 flak vests

from the Presidential Guard (PG) when the PG attempted to move them from Jericho. NSF contacts say 50 were intended for arrest teams in Nablus. The USSC has contacted GOI MoD, and PM Fayyad's military secretary, BG Hazem Attallah, told USSC that PM Fayyad had requested USG intervention. (Comment: These vests can be easily defeated by IDF weapons, but would give the NSF a qualitative advantage against well-armed militant/criminal gunmen. The current dispute seems to concern the vests' origin and Israeli clearance, not their protection level).

WALLES